

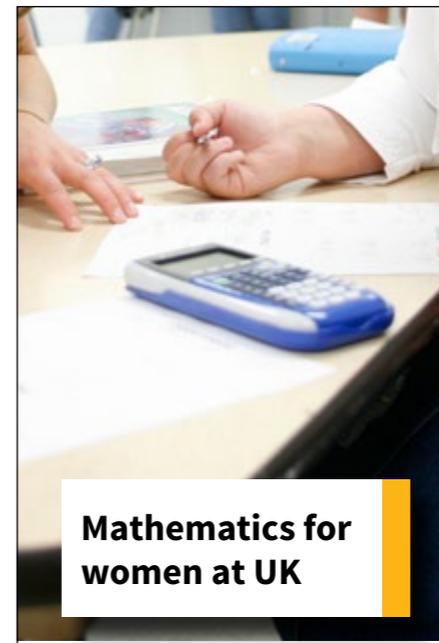
# ParentInfo

News for a child's most important educator

October 1, 2014



**Gov. Steve Beshear creates bullying task force**



**Mathematics for women at UK**



**So how was school today?**

## Additional content:

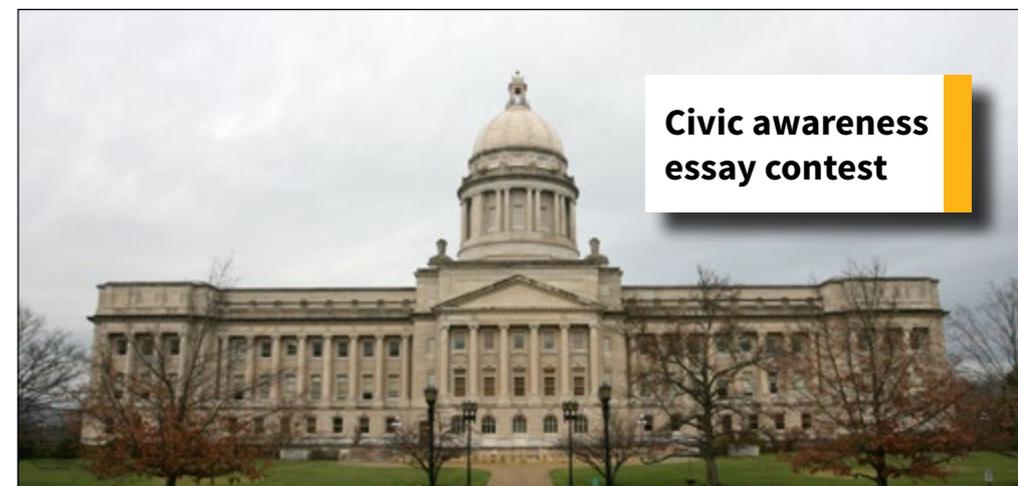
- Essay, video contest to examine religion and the First Amendment



*All photos by Amy Wallot unless otherwise noted*



**High school girls invited to leadership conference**



**Civic awareness essay contest**



## Twitter chat

Parents: Want to chat with educators? A parent/teacher twitter chat takes place at 9 p.m. every Wednesday. To participate or just follow the conversation, use the hashtag #PTchat.

# Gov. Beshear announces bullying task force



Kids can't learn when they are worried about the bully who will confront them in the hallway. That's why Gov. Steve Beshear has created the Kentucky Youth Bullying Prevention Task Force – a 22-member panel, including students – that will study bullying in schools and recommend practices and policies to help foster safer, harassment-free school environments.

More than one in four Kentucky students ages 12 to 18 reported being bullied at school in 2011, and the Kentucky Department of Education recorded 15,520 incidents of bullying in the state during the 2012-13 school year. That's one reported bullying incident every four minutes of every school day.

"No child should be so discouraged by bullies that he or she avoids school or withdraws from friends or activities," Beshear said as he announced the task force on Sept. 11. "Yet recent research suggests that getting bullied is a common experience. This task force will work on ways to empower students and to implement practices that root out intimidation and harassment."

The task force will analyze existing laws and policies; interview school professionals, bullying victims and other experts; and collect training and resource materials. The group will submit its findings, including recommendations for policy initiatives and school practices, to Beshear by Nov. 15, 2015.

"Acts of bullying don't just affect the victim. One bully in a classroom or neighborhood creates an atmosphere of tension, making it difficult to concentrate, much less learn effectively," Education Commissioner Terry Holliday said. "We owe it to our students, our teachers and our community to seek ways to eliminate these aggressive acts and foster good learning environments."

## October is Bullying Prevention Awareness Month

For more information about the awareness month and a list of events, see the [website for PACER's National Bullying Prevention Center](#). The Kentucky Department of Education offers more information about bullying prevention on the department's [bullying website](#). The [Kentucky Center for School Safety](#) also offers an anonymous online [tip line](#) for reports of bullying.

For tips from the U.S. Department of Education on how to prevent bullying and a mobile app created for parents to help prevent bullying, go to [www.stopbullying.gov](http://www.stopbullying.gov).

More information and a list of the task force members is available [here](#).





## Mathematics for Women Day at UK

Many talented women choose not to take mathematics once they get to college, but deciding not to continue math education can limit their career options. The University of Kentucky hopes to encourage more women to continue their math education through High School Mathematics Day for Women, a daylong event on Nov. 1.

The event will include an individual problem-solving competition, a presentation by a woman who uses mathematics in her work and a variety of hands-on activities, problems and puzzles. The competition problems will not involve math beyond algebra and geometry, but students will find that their solutions require using familiar ideas in a new context.

The free event, which is open to students in grades 9 to 12 and their teachers and parents, will be from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. on the UK campus in Lexington. Because space is limited, students should register [here](#) by Oct. 17.

There will also be a chance for teachers, parents and mathematics faculty to discuss preparation for the study of mathematics at UK.

For more information, see the school's [website](#) or contact Ben Braun at [benjamin.braun@uky.edu](mailto:benjamin.braun@uky.edu) or 859-257-6810.



# 25 ways to ask your kids ‘So how was school today?’

It’s the question every parent has asked after school. “How was school today?”

But instead of hearing about that great science experiment or what happened in the cafeteria, the answer is often “fine.”

So, being an engaged parent, you might try again.

“So what happened at school today?”

The reply: “Nothing.”

While you may think your child is just avoiding conversation, the problem might not be the answers, it might be the questions.

A blogger at the parent and sewing blog [Simple Simon and Co.](#) came up with 25 engaging questions parents can use to find out how school was without asking the failed question.



After trying questions with her son and daughter, the blogger wrote in her [post](#) that the questions elicited interesting answers (in full sentences), sparked meaningful conversations and gave her insight into how her children feel about learning and school. The blog also includes a list of questions geared toward [high school students](#).

*(this was used with permission from the blogger)*

## Here’s her list:

1. What was the best thing that happened at school today? (What was the worst thing that happened at school today?)
2. Tell me something that made you laugh today.
3. If you could choose who would you like to sit by in class? (Who would you NOT want to sit by in class? Why?)
4. Where is the coolest place at the school?
5. Tell me a weird word that you heard today. (Or something weird that someone said.)
6. If I called your teacher tonight what would he or she tell me about you?
7. How did you help someone today?
8. How did someone help you today?
9. Tell me one thing that you learned today.
10. When were you the happiest today?
11. When were you bored today?
12. If an alien spaceship came to your class and beamed up someone who would you want them to take?
13. Who would you like to play with at recess that you’ve never played with before?
14. Tell me something good that happened today.
15. What word did your teacher say most today?
16. What do you think you should do/learn more of at school?
17. What do you think you should do/learn less of at school?
18. Who in your class do you think you could be nicer to?
19. Where do you play the most at recess?
20. Who is the funniest person in your class? Why is he/she so funny?
21. What was your favorite part of lunch?
22. If you got to be the teacher tomorrow what would you do?
23. Is there anyone in your class that needs a time out?
24. If you could switch seats with anyone in the class, who would you trade with? Why?
25. Tell me about three different times you used your pencil today at school.



# High school girls invited to NKY leadership conference

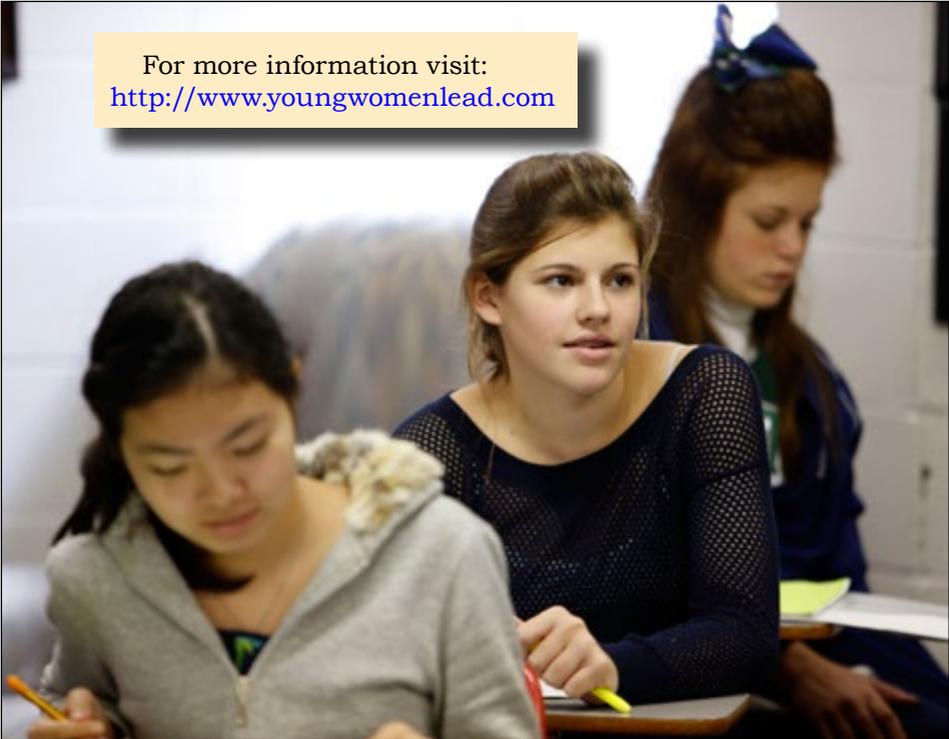
Toyota will present the fourth annual Young Women LEAD Conference on Oct. 28 on the campus of Northern Kentucky University.

The free conference for girls in grades 9 through 12 is designed to inspire young women to believe in their qualities and strengths, and to challenge them to seek a higher level of personal growth and development.

The conference, which runs from 8 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. ET, will feature Emily Cook, three-time Olympian and six-time national champion in aerial skiing. In addition to Cook's keynote address, RoadTrip Nation will deliver a mini-keynote empowering the students to define their own road in life instead of traveling down someone else's.

The conference is a partnership with SOAR and NKU's College of Education and Human Services. Registration is limited to the first 1,000 students. Registration will close on Oct. 14, if capacity has not been reached before that date.

For more information visit:  
<http://www.youngwomenlead.com>



# Essay, video contest to examine religion and the First Amendment

Students in grades 9 through 12 can enter the First Freedom Student Competition, a national essay and video contest that examines the First Amendment and freedom of religion in American democracy. The contest includes the opportunity to compete for \$2,500 awards.

This school year, students will select a religion from their local community, state or region that was or is a minority group. Students will research and analyze its history as it encounters issues of religious freedom and equality, and then present their evaluation – in the form of a video or written essay – of how the group’s local history compares to the broader narrative of U.S. history and First Amendment law.

Student online registration is required on or before Nov. 17; the postmark deadline for students to mail their essays or videos with the accompanying entry materials is Nov. 24. Winners will be announced on April 13, 2015.

For the complete topic, essay and video guidelines, registration and other details, visit [www.firstfreedom.org](http://www.firstfreedom.org), and then click on First Freedom Student Competition.



## Essay and slogan contest promotes civic awareness

Students in grades 6 through 12 can get in the spirit of the election season by entering the annual Secretary of State Essay and Slogan Contest.

Secretary of State Alison Lundergan Grimes encourages all eligible students to enter the contest, which is designed to expand civic awareness of students who will soon be eligible to vote.

“The Essay and Slogan Contest is a fantastic chance for students to get engaged early in our democratic process,” said Grimes. “As Kentucky’s chief advocate for civic engagement, I encourage all students in the commonwealth to demonstrate a commitment to active citizenship by participating in this contest.”

Students in 6<sup>th</sup> to 8<sup>th</sup> grades may enter the voter slogan portion of the contest by submitting an attention-grabbing word or phrase that expresses the importance of voting. The winning slogans will be chosen in an online poll. The first-, second- and third-place winners will receive cash awards of \$1,000, \$600 and \$400, respectively.

Students in grades 9 to 12 can take part in the essay portion of the contest, which will focus on the role of the media in elections. The University of Kentucky Scripps Howard First Amendment Center, one of the contest’s sponsors, will judge the entries. A \$1,000 prize will be awarded to the winner in each high school grade level.

In addition to the secretary of state’s office, the contest is sponsored and funded by the Kentucky Education Association and KEA-Retired, UK’s Scripps Howard First Amendment Center, the Kentucky Council on Post-secondary Education and the Kentucky Department of Education.

Prompts, rules and entry forms are available at <http://www.sos.ky.gov/contests>. All guidelines must be met for an entry to be considered, and entries must be electronically submitted by 5 p.m. on Dec. 12 or postmarked by that date.

